

# Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs Part 1

## Tech Hubs: The Key to Future Innovation

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## About This Series

“Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs” is a six-part series focused on helping tech hub leaders develop more inclusive cultures, programs and spaces. The series, which includes six easy-to-follow videos plus corresponding resources, provides a comprehensive guide to help you implement the recommended strategies at local tech hubs around the world.

Welcome to Part 1 of this series: “Inclusive Tech Hubs: The Key to Future Innovation,” providing advice, tools and actionable steps for tech hubs to lead on inclusion. After you review these materials, be sure to check out the other installments in this “Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs” series:

1. **Inclusive Tech Hubs: the Key to Future Innovation**
2. Measurement & Accountability
3. The Role of Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion
4. Creating An Inclusive Culture
5. Expanding Your Diversity Goals Through External Programs
6. Creating Inclusive Physical Spaces

This toolkit series is created by Change Catalyst and sponsored by Women Techmakers. [Change Catalyst](#) empowers inclusive & sustainable innovation globally through Startup Ecosystem and Tech Inclusion Programs. [Women Techmakers](#) is Google’s global program that provides visibility, community and resources for women in technology.

## What A Tech Hub Looks Like



Photo by Melinda Briana Epler

In the ever-expanding tech economy, tech hubs are the centers of innovation for cities and regions around the world. We consider a tech hub to be a physical space or community that provides educational opportunities, meetups, events and coworking spaces. It may also house an incubator or accelerator.

Inside a tech hub, you'll find a community of entrepreneurs, engineers, investors and community leaders, building innovative tech products and services. Tech hubs provide support to early stage startups, access to mentorship and new team members, skills building and career development, shared spaces and learning, as well as formal and informal opportunities for collaboration.



Photos by Techboogie Media

## What Is Inclusion?

**Diversity** is bringing people to the table from a wide variety of unique backgrounds. But it's not enough to just sit at the table. **Inclusion** invites them to speak and encourages them to lead. You need both diversity and inclusion for your teams and communities to thrive.

A fully inclusive culture is one where everyone is welcomed, accepted, respected, supported and able to thrive – across all genders, races, ethnicities, classes, abilities, religious beliefs, geographic origins, sexual orientations, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, parental status, plus people who are veterans and those formerly incarcerated.

## Why It's Important For Tech Hubs To Be Inclusive

When we're all included, we are all happier and produce better business results. We love coming to work, we have more confidence, we're more productive and we can show up as our full selves. Our staff satisfaction increases, turnover decreases and we all invest in our workplace.

### The Impact

Tech hubs are the centers of innovation for our cities and collaboration between diverse people creates the more innovative solutions. Inclusive teams solve problems for everyone. Innovation must come from all of us, for all of us.

## The Gap

Tech is the most rapidly growing sector, with some of the highest paid jobs, yet right now it is leaving people out. This is what we call the wealth and opportunity gap. Yet tech is a rare industry in which newcomers can train in specific market-current tools and skills in a relatively short amount of time. [By some estimates](#), it is one of the few industries where you can enter the workforce with the right skills in under a year.

At the same time, there are many vacant tech jobs and that gap continues to grow, [the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts](#) a 17% increase in software development jobs by 2024 and median salary of \$100k. Right now tech is losing out on this valuable opportunity by not including more people from different backgrounds.

## The Opportunity

Increasing diversity and inclusion can dramatically affect the products you make and the bottom line for your company. Here's the data (from [McKinsey](#)):

- Diverse & inclusive teams show **22% greater productivity** and **39% higher customer satisfaction**.
- Gender diverse leadership teams have **15% higher financial returns**.
- Ethnically diverse leadership teams have **35% higher financial returns**.

## Why Diversity And Inclusion In Tech Is Everyone's Problem To Solve

*Where skills and the ability to learn are universal, opportunity is not.*

We all have a role to play in solving diversity and inclusion in tech. Why? Because we all had a role in creating the imbalances that currently keep underrepresented people out of tech. There are number of factors, which include:

- **Network effect**  
Access to capital and jobs in tech both rely on networks that some people don't have access to. Even understanding the tech culture and how the tech industry operates can be tough for people who aren't currently inside the tech industry.
- **Tech education gap**  
This gap starts in early childhood education and grows larger from there. Without early digital access and role models, kids are less likely to be interested in tech in the first place. Even if they become interested, unless they attend an elite school, they are less likely to be hired for tech roles.

❑ **False meritocracy**

In the tech industry, there is a belief that everyone gets to the top due to their own merit and that others who aren't at the top just didn't have the skills to get there. But our systems are created for and by a homogenous culture that actively and passively leaves out the majority of the world's population.

❑ **Lack of Representation**

There's also a lack of representation of people from diverse backgrounds working in tech, in the media, in textbooks, in toys and in films. If you can see it, you can be it. But if you don't see it, you might not know tech is a real path for you.

❑ **Change is Hard**

Changing behavior is hard and full of economic and emotional barriers. We're humans with biases that affect our judgements about people. To be more inclusive we must work on our own empathy for others and acknowledge and filter our biases. To have more inclusive companies and tech hubs, we have to change lots of individual behaviors. This is not an easy task and takes both time and resources.

We'll show you how to work through these challenges over the course of this series. When you develop an inclusive culture at your tech hub, you'll be rewarded with an innovation ecosystem that truly thrives. It's good for business, it's good for the local economy and it's good for the world. Learn how you and your team can address these issues and become a more inclusive tech hub!

## Next Steps Checklist

- ❑ Gather a team of people interested in creating change in your tech hub and watch this video series together.

## Action Plan

Use the next videos in this series to develop your Action Plan. Once you have an idea of which prioritized outcomes you want to achieve, fill out the chart below to get started on creating change in your organization!

Desired Outcome	Action Steps	Resources Needed	Project Timeline	Measurable Progress
1.				
2.				
3.				

## Additional Resources

Take your study beyond Part 1 of this toolkit by exploring the other [5 parts of this toolkit](#) and watching the [full video series](#). Learn more about Change Catalyst and Women Techmakers and join the community below. Each part of this series will also include resources and further reading like the links below.

### Change Catalyst

- Learn more about Change Catalyst: <http://change catalyst.co>
- Attend a Tech Inclusion event near you: <http://techinclusion.co>
- Read current articles on inclusion from Change Catalyst : <http://blog.techinclusion.co>
- Follow Change Catalyst on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/change catalysts>
- Watch more videos from Change Catalyst on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/ChangeCatalyst>
- Join the community on Facebook: <http://facebook.com/change catalysts/>
- Stay in touch on LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/change-catalyst>
- See recent events and inspiration from Change Catalyst on Instagram: [@techinclusionco](#)

### Women Techmakers

- Learn more about the program by visiting: <https://www.womentechmakers.com/>
- Receive additional resources from Women Techmakers by joining: <https://www.womentechmakers.com/membership>
- Follow Women Techmakers on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WomenTechmakers>
- Watch more videos from Women Techmakers on YouTube: <http://youtube.com/womentechmakers>
- Stay in touch with the network via the WomenTechmakers Google+ Community: <https://plus.google.com/communities/100202454944694552166>

### Further Reading

- Jennifer Brown: “[Inclusion: Diversity, The New Workplace and the Will to Change](#),” 2016
- Vivian Hunt, Dennis Layton, Sara Prince: “[Why Diversity Matters](#),” *McKinsey & Company*, January 2015.
- “[Coding Bootcamp Alumni Outcomes & Demographics Study](#),” *Course Report*, 2016.

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